

LOCAL BREVITIES.

Oysters are taking the lead this week. The demand for them is immense.

There are several weddings booked for Plymouth this week.

Stop into the Phoenix and get your shoes shined up in good shape.

John Blain went to Donaldson today on business.

Agents of all kinds are in town trying to sell their goods.

Will Ellis, formerly clerk in the Ross house, but now of Bourdon, is in this today.

Mrs. C. S. Price returned home from Indianapolis Saturday night, from a short visit with relatives.

A number of the teachers in the Plymouth schools have left for their homes to spend the holidays.

Skating on the bayon yesterday was extra fine and a large number of skaters enjoyed themselves up there in the afternoon.

Tonight is nomination night in Hyperian lodge. A good attendance is expected. Good officers go a good ways in making a lodge a success.

The horses used by the fire department were kept harnessed Saturday night in anticipation of a fire.

George W. Marble is home from an extended trip through Wisconsin in the interest of the Indiana Novelty company.

Leave your order for Xmas turkeys, ducks, geese, chickens, game, oysters, home grown celery, at Kuhn's market.

Our young friends from the country were in town today and laid aside several very handsome Christmas presents which they will call for later on.

Miss Ella Dickey, who was arrested Saturday night by Constable Baxter was taken to her home this morning. It is said that she is a very sick girl. Her case will be called later.

John Greenburg, of Peru, who spent Sunday with his nephew, Fred Greenburg, of North Center street, returned home this morning.

What is needed now to make the holidays more pleasant, is about ten inches of snow. The roads are in fine condition but more snow is needed to make the sleighing what it should be.

City Clerk Leonard and Treasurer Kelley are busy transferring the delinquent tax list of 1896 to the duplicate of 1897. This is a big job and it will require several days to complete the work.

Young men that get into trouble and want their names suppressed from the public, will never be president of the United States.

Ed Lanfeste held the lucky number that drew the bicycle raffish off Saturday night. No. 23 drew the wheel. When the weather moderates and the roads get in good condition Ed will make a century run.

Had it not been for the City Marshall one poor unfortunate would have passed in his checks Friday night. He was in such a beastly state of intoxication that he would have frozen stiff before morning. He was given quarters in the county jail.

Peter Maher the great Irish champion has issued a challenge to fight any man in the world for the heavy weight championship. He says that unless his challenge is accepted he will claim the title and under the rules he will be given the diamond belt.

Treasurer Elect Vink will take charge of the treasurers office Jan. 1st, '98. G. F. Knoblock, of Bremen, will not act in the capacity of deputy treasurer as different arrangements have been made.

A jolly crowd of young ladies and gentlemen to the number of ten enjoyed a bob sled ride last evening. They kept within the corporation limits of Plymouth and after two hours of fun they halted at Shoemakers restaurant where an oyster supper was served.

There is a joy in the tinkle of the bells in the merry winter time that effects almost everybody. A sleigh or sled without bells on the horses don't go so much and their use is a fashion that is so essential that a sleigh ride without bells is very dull pleasure.

Mr. Ellis, the cigar manufacturer of Bourdon is in the city today. Mr. Ellis is doing a good business, and his "cough heads" find a ready sale. He is well pleased with Bourdon and thinks it a very pretty place to live. We are glad to note this fact and to know that he is prospering in business.

Bert Marole has taken "Ratus" the little colored boy, and will give him a home for the present. Bert showed his humanity when he gave this little waif a home and he will find the colored boy all right, and a splendid little fellow, who if we do not misjudge will prove true to every trust.

But speaking of eccentric verdicts, what do you think of the following? It was presented by a coroner's jury in Virginia: "We, the jury, find that the deceased came to his death by a blow struck on the head by a blunt-pointed instrument; fell overboard and was drowned, and was washed ashore and was frozen to death."

The editor of the Columbia City Commercial is up in arms against the woman who persists in wearing high hats during a performance in a theatre. Nothing of that kind is complained of in Plymouth. The ladies wear the high hats all right enough and they look very sweet in them but they have the good taste to remove them before the curtain rises.

There is an ordinance that requires that every peddler take out license in Plymouth. Some don't do it at the proper time but they are invariably brought to time. There was a case brought this morning before Justice Reeves for not taking out license, and it was postponed until Monday next.

The side walks have been very slippery today and a number of our old time stand by's have struck the stone walks very hard but they not have been christians they might have expressed an opinion on the ups and downs of life.

Harry Woodard and Mary Wade were married Saturday night. Harry is an employee of the bicycle factory, and his bride is well known in Plymouth. She is handsome and good natured and Harry is to be congratulated on securing her for a life partner. The independent wishes them all the success that may come to them.

H. G. Thayer, of this city lectured in Goshen Sunday evening. His subject was Paul's Journey to Rome. The Presbyterian church was crowded and from what we have been able to learn the audience was an appreciative one, and the speaker was at his best. There are a number of platform orators in the country at this time, who command and get big prices for their lectures, but there are none better than H. G. Thayer who asks no financial remuneration.

It is now authoritatively stated that Fitzsimmons will give Jim Corbett no more chance to redeem himself. Julian says that another fight will positively take place in the near future.

An exciting scene took place in a Justice court in Crawfordville Saturday. Roy Cox was charged with being the author of Irene Yunkin's ruin. He denied the charge. Miss Yunkin drew a revolver and fired at the young man but the bullet missed him and cut off a bunch of the courts whiskers. He said the girl did right and refused to fight her for contempt of court.

Cal Suminger, well known in Plymouth, is publishing a daily paper at Warren, Ind., and he goes after a subscriber who "refused," his his paper as follows:

"The first fellow to run up against the Independent buzz saw for not paying his subscription bill is one named Joseph Williams. He is indebted to this office since the 21st, of Feb. 1897, and today showed his paper back into the office marked 'refused.' It is our candid opinion, plainly expressed in Anglo-Saxon, that a man who will try to beat a small paper bill would steal sheep or chickens. We don't say that Williams would steal sheep or chickens, but if we lived close to where he does we would keep a good padlock on our sheep pen and chicken coop. At that some men lack to keep from becoming sheep thieves is a good opportunity. Williams, sir named Joseph, will die some day and we promise him a red hot obituary."

Last Saturday night Constable Baxter arrested John Doe and Richard Roe in a house on North Plumb street accompanied by a young lady by the name of Ella Dickey. Roe and Doe paid up and Ella went to jail. Her case will be heard by Justice Corbin later.

She is charged with running a house of ill fame and as Roe and Doe plead guilty of frequenting the place Ella will have some trouble squaring herself in the eyes of the law. We have made inquiries today as to the identity of Roe and Doe but have failed to get their true names. If we knew who they were the public would know but unless someone tells us we cannot do it. Later on we may be able to enlighten the public as to who they are.

M. E. Church Notes.

Yesterday the Sunday schools were as usual, well attended. The teachers are much interested in the preparations for Christmas.

The Superintendent gave directions for the seating of the Sunday School in the auditorium Friday evening. Superintendents are to be displayed. The trees are going to be under the directions of the various teachers and all occur in the Sunday school room. Anticipation are high for a joyous time and well deserved so. Let all hearts be glad, and let the will of Him who gave himself for us.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Hereafter regular services will be held at the usual hours for this season. Rev. Thornberry's goods have arrived and he and his family will be busy for a week getting settled when he will take up his pastoral duties and be able to extend his acquaintance. They are the guests of Mr and Mrs. Parks over Sunday. Preaching services at 10:30 and 7:00. Sunday school at 12 m. and Junior and senior endeavor societies at 4 and 6 o'clock.

FREAK OF NATURE IN FLORIDA.

Stretch of Land, 50,000 Acres in Extent, Covered with Sink-Holes.

Payne's prairie, three miles south of Gainesville, Fla., covers an area of 50,000 acres. A large proportion of the prairie is now covered with water, but there are thousands of acres around the borders of the lake which has been formed on which horses and other cattle graze. There is no way of estimating the number of cattle, but there are many thousands, and they are in fine condition. The prairie, or savanna, which it really is, occasionally goes dry, the water passing out through a subterranean passage called the sink. Where the water goes has never been determined. When the sink is open the lake goes dry, and when the outlet becomes gorged or choked a lake from five to seven miles wide and about eighteen miles long is formed. When the waters of the lake suddenly leave thousands of alligators, snakes, fish and turtles are left with nothing but mud for their places of abode. The fish and turtles perish, but the saurians and reptiles seek and find other quarters. For miles along the northern border of the lake there is a succession of sinks, averaging in depth all the way from twenty-five to 100 feet. Subterranean passages run in every direction, leaving the ground in the shape of a honeycomb. The ground is liable to give way at any time, creating a new sink. Scenery around the lake, especially on the north side, is unique and grand, and is an attractive feature to strangers who visit Gainesville. The sink has long been popular as a resort for citizens of Gainesville, who go there to fish, boat ride and in other ways enjoy themselves. It is said that this vast area of land could be drained at trifling expense, and were it drained it would be the largest as well as the richest tract of productive land in Florida. It is for the most part a bed of muck. The land is owned by various individuals.

FOREIGNERS IN CHINA.

Ten Thousand, of Whom 13 Per Cent Are Americans.

There are over 10,000 Europeans and Americans resident in China, says the New York Herald. The English head the list with 4,000; the Americans number 1,325; Germans, 882; Norwegians, 375; Russians, 116; Italians, 108, etc. There are 669 Japanese. Twenty-two ports are open to foreign residents—that is to say, Europeans are allowed to acquire conditional title to certain lands, on which they live, govern themselves and have special privileges in judicial matters. These ports are Mengtz, Lung Chow, Pakhoi, King Chow, Lappa, Canton, Kowloon, Swatow, Amoy, Fuchuan, Wanshow, Ningpo, Shanghai, Chinkiang, Wuhu, Kiukiang, Hankow, Ichang, Chungking, Chefoo, Tientsin and Nouchwang. It is to be noted that Pekin does not appear on this list, although the embassies and legations are established there. The Chinese who find themselves under foreign jurisdiction appear more than contented with the situation, because, although taxes are high, they are fixed. Two hundred thousand natives live in the European settlements of Shanghai. Besides the foreign residents of China, a large number live in ports that have been ceded to other nations. For instance, Hongkong comprises in its civil population 4,195 Europeans and Americans. With the troops and sailors, this number is raised to 8,545. Hongkong is the actual capital of foreign industry in the far east. More than 3,000 vessels, with a tonnage of nearly 4,000,000, touch there annually. The same spirit which caused the development of Singapore, Colombo and Hongkong is to be found in the foreign settlements of the open ports of China.

SELF-DISTRUST.

It Is More General Than People Imagine—Means Failure.

Probably self-distrust is one of the readiest causes of failure, says the Spectator. A man who, however much he conceals the fact from observation, feels in his heart of hearts that he is not capable of doing the work that he has undertaken, is almost sure to fail. Ordinary diffidence as to one's powers is quite another matter, and by no means a necessary impediment to success. Such nervousness is often purely superficial and merely means that the anxiety to succeed is so great that it causes a reaction. The dangerous self-distrust to which we are alluding is a much more negative quality and generally has joined to it a strong chain of indifference. But when a man does not think he will succeed, and is doubtful whether it is worth while to succeed, or rather whether it is not a matter of indifference whether he wins or loses, failure is almost certain. This stultifying indifference to failure is much more widely spread than people generally imagine. Because failure seems to the average man so horrible, producing, as it must, humiliations and miseries, remorseful feelings and regrets of every kind, the average man cannot imagine any human being different to it. Yet, as a matter of fact, there are men whose hearts become so indurated that they do not mind either failure or its consequences. They would endure anything rather than rouse themselves to the painful effort of resisting the march of what they call fate. They will float with the stream or tide, but, come what may, they will not row a stroke against either.

Convenient Handle.

The original idea of the Chinaman's pigtail was that it formed a convenient handle by which, one day, he would be lifted to paradise. The curious belief is still to be found among the natives.

EGRETS FOR WOMEN'S HATS.

Cruelty and Slaughter That Produce These Ornaments.

Thomas Jones pushes quietly into the edge of the nesting ground, ties his boat firmly within easy range of the tall snag he saw the day before, and takes out his rifle, says Forest and Stream. There is an egret on the tall snag. Taking a steady aim, he fires, and the bird whirls down dead. One or two other birds start on their perches in the same tree, but settle back. One by one they, too, whirl out and lie in a white tangled mass at the foot of the tree. An egret raises herself above the rim of the nest on which she sits, and the tiny bullet pierces her. She whirls down, lying white and motionless. The little ones gape and cry, but no food comes. The father was killed on the tree near by. One by one out of the nests, off the limbs of the trees, here, there, anywhere—for the birds are all about, and so stupid with the breeding fever that they will not leave—the slender white birds meet their doom. That tall snag has yielded twenty victims. Jones has not moved from his boat. He has over 200 birds down. He can tell by his cartridge boxes, for he rarely misses a shot. It is easy shooting. After noon he gathers up his spoils. A cut of the knife and the clump of plume is off. Two hundred carcasses of egrets are left lying. That many more tomorrow. Many more than that the next day, for by that time the wailing of the dying young of the first day's victims will have ceased. From then on, day by day, increasing in threefold ratio, the harvest of death goes on, steadily, pitilessly, on the sowing grounds of life, out in the silent wilderness where the birds have tried to hide their homes. In less than a month it is over. The long white lines no longer cross the country going to and from the feeding grounds. The white forms no longer appear on the naked trees. Doubly naked the forest stands in silent desolation. Sudden and discolored the once white forms below the trees are sinking into the slime. From beneath the trees and from the nests up in the trees a great stench goes up. Not a bird, young or old, is left alive. The old staved till death came, bound by the great instinct of nature to remain with their young.

AN AFFRONT RESENTED.

The Belle of the Rival Town Got Even.

"There was the most intense rivalry between two towns in Colorado and I was a resident of one of them," said the retired business man to the Detroit Free Press reporter. "It was not altogether a generous rivalry, and within certain classes disputed superiority generally led to muscular discussion. Business men vied for trade in debatable territory, the doctors, the lawyers, even the ministers, said harsh things against the other town, but it was in social circles that the belligerency was apparent at its height. People who could not afford it would go in for display, and when the two places had a function in common the toilets were chosen with special reference to showing that they were very expensive or to casting reflection upon the rival city. At a mask ball held in the other place I had the hardihood and impudence to perpetrate what I thought a telling joke. I was dressed in a costume of newspapers and appeared in the literary character of 'The Quick and the Dead.' Gradually it dawned upon the residents that the papers of my own town represented the 'quick,' while the papers of their town represented the 'dead.' It was an unpardonable insult. Indignation ran so high that I began to wish I had not been so brilliant. The sensational denouement came when a belle of the rival city took a little promenade with me and quietly touched a lighted match to my costume. In an instant I was all quick and no dead. I rolled in the grass, and in due time the conflagration was extinguished, but you can see the marks yet."

"Then the papers of the other town made a dead set at me, raked up my record even more thoroughly than if I had been running for office and made some remote locality look so inviting that I left."

STAGE TRAGEDIES.

"Ended His Days as an Actor Ought to Do."

One of the dramatic little stories of Mr. F. Frankfort Moore, the London novelist, turns on the actual stabbing of a Juliet by a jealous Romeo during a performance in a German court theater, says Harper's Weekly. Such tragic incidents have not infrequently occurred in the annals of opera and play house. In our own city's chief lyric theater last season we had in what seemed the lively comedy of an actor something leading up to his sudden death, when the unfortunate Castlemar, as Sir Tristan Mickleford, was pursued by a crowd of Richmond Fair folk in "Martha." There are at least a dozen well-attested suicides that have been consummated by luckless actors and singers under cover of the tragic movement of their part. A more recent example occurred at the theater in Arad, Hungary, when a well-known leading member of the company, Koloman Balla, put a real and loaded revolver to his forehead in concluding the last act of the night's drama. He fell dead, amid an immense demonstration of applause from a crowded house quite unaware of the reality of the actor's emotion and gestures. He was a man of excellent family and bright in professional prospects, disappointed in love, morbid, and, as he grimly wrote to a friend, "determined to end his days as an actor ought to do—to the satisfaction of his public."

The places that shine most are seldom the most important ones.

AUSTRIAN EMPIRE CHANGED.

The Emperor Is Really a Remarkable Man.

Nothing is more wonderful than the difference between the Austrian empire that was and the Austrian empire that is. I knew it about forty years ago, says a correspondent in London Truth. Then it was one of the cheapest countries in Europe, now there is no country dearer. In this it has kept pace with Germany. Bohemia is probably the wealthiest state of the Austrian empire. The people there have always been comfortably off, and now they are well off. I never came across a village where the houses are not far better built than the English farmhouses and cottages. If there is no great luxury, there seems to be no want. But agriculture is not the sole industry. Factories are springing up everywhere. In all parts one sees tall chimneys. They are not picturesque, but they mean energy and the creation of wealth. The emperor is really a remarkable man. Practically not only the foreign affairs of the empire are in his hands, but so thorough is the belief in his honesty and good sense that he may be said to keep the empire together. He is no longer a young man, and whether the empire will fall to pieces after him is a possible contingency. The heir is a young man, whose health is so bad that he is not likely to live to inherit the crown. He is, by the way, one of the best horsemen in the empire, but this is hardly a gift calculated to keep the various component and antagonistic parts of it in harmony.

ODD AND INTERESTING.

Heroes do not fear death but they shrink from disfigurement. Hence terror will be scattered abroad by the new weapon—a vitriol gun which has been invented. As its name implies, it discharges the deadly acid instead of bullets.

It was not until 1878 that the manufacture of hairpins began in the United States. Previous to that time those used in this country were brought from England or France. Now the trade is such a large one that it takes 50,000 packages, each containing twenty-four pins, to supply the wholesale demand daily in New York alone.

Ten thousand six hundred and fifty-two murders were committed in the United States last year.

Switzerland, though she spends only half a million dollars yearly in her army, can turn out 100,000 trained men in two days in case of need and has a reserve of 100,000 more and a land-storm of 270,000. The army maneuvers this year will be held in the mountains of the Engadine.

There has been a scarcity of cents in Toronto, caused by the 15,000 Epworth leaguers who were there carrying off about 50,000 of the copper coins as souvenirs. To relieve the situation a half ton of the cents was shipped from Montreal.

South American lovers have a pretty custom. It is well known that when the petals of the great laurel magnolia are touched, however lightly, the result is a brown spot, which develops in a few hours. The fact is taken advantage of by the lover, who pulls a magnolia flower, and on one of its pure, white petals writes a motto or message with a hard, sharp-pointed pencil. Then he sends the flower, the young lady puts it in a vase of water, and in three or four hours the message written on the leaf becomes quite visible and remains so.

In the old German town Hanover there is buried a countess who denied the existence of God and ridiculed the idea of the resurrection. In her contempt for Christianity she ordered that after her death her grave should be built of solid masonry and covered with enormous stones, bound tightly together by iron clamps. On this tomb she ordered to be engraved her defiant challenge that it could never be disturbed by God or man. One day the seed vessels of trees above the countess' grave lodged in a small crevice in the tomb, where it soon sprouted, and, extending its delicate roots under the massive stones, quietly and slowly raised them from their place, the sod beneath it furnishing nourishment for the majestic tree that has accomplished what the woman defied God to do.

Student's Weird Parade.

"There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight," was played by the Second regiment band, which headed the procession of Yale "Sheff" seniors in a weird parade in celebration of the freshman victory in two of the three athletic events at New Haven. Brother Jonathan, attired in a red, white and blue suit, marched with a blond ballet girl and a negro clown. Beside this group danced a big, red faced Bismarck who partially held up a ministerial-looking gentleman in a tall white hat. An officious policeman in blue uniform and brass buttons was enraptured with a pretty girl whose golden hair was hanging down her back. Wild West Indians were thick.—Ex.

Threw Dollars at His Wife.

Because he threw silver dollars at her, Carrie L. Jackson of Pittsburgh, Pa., applied for a divorce from her husband, Edward Jackson. The decree in the case was made today, and the divorce was granted. The money was thrown at her, Mrs. Jackson claimed, by her husband while he was intoxicated. She could stand the money, but not the intoxication.

\$10 A WEEK FOR EIGHT.

Feeding a Family at a Cost of 18 Cents a Day for Each Person.

In the Ladies' Home Journal Mrs. S. T. Rorer tells how a family of eight persons can be fed—and well fed—at the aggregate cost of \$10 a week. "To carry out the scheme," she says, "articles must be purchased economically and no waste permitted. A table which is supplied for a family of eight for \$10 a week must, of necessity, be plain, but it may, at the same time, not lack for variety or wholesomeness. Sweetmeats and rich desserts must be counted only as occasional luxuries and 'company' dishes must be omitted altogether. Meat, the most expensive food item, may be purchased in a much larger quantity than is needed for a single meal and utilized French fashion. The poor and middle class of this country must learn more about the food value of the legumens, more about the proper preparation of food and last, but not least, more about the proper combinations of food. Avoid the buying of steaks, roasts and chops each week. It is an expensive household in which has no repertoire of cheap dishes. A beef's heart or a braised calf's liver makes an excellent and economical change. Broiled sheep's kidneys, with a little bacon, give a good breakfast, at a cost of 10 cents. Smothered beef, which may be made from the tough end of the rump steak, is appetizing and only costs half the price of an equal food value of tenderloin steak. The housekeeper should go to market early and buy only the best materials. They keep longer and go further than the inferior ones. Perishable food should be bought in small quantities two or three times a week. Groceries enough to last a month should be laid in. Canned goods and preserved sweets should be bought sparingly. Meat is always a most expensive article and not a particle of it should be allowed to go to waste."

CHANGING A CLIMATE.

Engineer Proposes to Alter Temperature of Vladivostok.

It is not impossible that by a simple feat of engineering the climate of Vladivostok may be so changed that the port will not be closed by ice in the winter, says the San Francisco Chronicle. The intense cold of the region, which is in the latitude of New York, Spain and southern Italy, is measurably due to the arctic current from the sea of Okhotsk, which runs through the strait of Tartary into the sea of Japan, keeping along the Siberian and Chinese shores. But for this current Vladivostok would have at least as mild a winter climate as Hakodate, the opposite point in Japan, for then the warm flood from Tsushima straits and the Japanese gulf stream would bathe its shores. The proposition is to check the arctic stream at that point in the strait of Tartary, where the distance from the mainland to Saghalien island is only about nine miles. A Russian engineer has proposed to do the work for \$200,000,000, probably by means of a jetty, the stone and labor to construct which are both available and cheap. It is said that the czar's government is not unfavorably impressed with the idea and has looked into it. The success of this stupendous enterprise would be of much climatic advantage to Korea, as well as to the Siberian pan-handle, making that country even more desirable than it now is to a European power, but the result to eastern Japan does not promise so well. To divert the southbound Okhotsk current from its present channel is to risk sending it over to the other side of the Japanese group and down the shore between the mainland and the gulf stream, in which event a large part of Dai Nippon might soon cease to have any association with peach buds and chrysanthemums and take up with ice-cubes.

True Marriage.

What marriage may be in the case of two persons of cultivated faculties, identical in opinions and purposes, between whom exists that best kind of equality, similarity of powers and capacities with reciprocal superiority in them, so that each can enjoy the pleasure of looking up to the other and can have alternately the pleasure of leading and of being led in the path of development, I will not attempt to describe—to those who can conceive it there is no need, to those who cannot it would appear the dream of an enthusiast. But I maintain, with the profoundest conviction, that this and this only is the ideal of marriage, and that all opinions, customs and institutions which favor any other notion of it or turn the conceptions or aspirations connected with it into any other direction, by whatever pretenses they may be colored, are relics of primitive barbarism. The moral regeneration of mankind will only really commence when the most fundamental of social relations is placed under the rule of equal justice, and when human beings learn to cultivate their strongest sympathy with an equal in right and cultivation.—John Stuart Mill.

Probably a Base Slender.

They are telling of Boston that a woman resident of that center of culture has a complete breakfast service of cups, saucers and plates for her large family, on which are given, from photographs, the likenesses of the members, so that the servants can properly place the china to be used.—Exchange.

United States French.

"Julius, do you think people will understand our French if we go to Paris in 1900?" "Of course, there will be lots of other Americans there."—Detroit Free Press.